

*Comments
Of
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To the
9/11 Public Discourse Project
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I am honored to be a member of this distinguished panel. I applaud the 9/11 Public Discourse Project and the 9/11 families for their persistence and tireless practical efforts to promote intelligence community (IC) reform and to monitor its implementation over time. Without such pressure, in my opinion, meaningful reform will not happen.

Public debate about intelligence is not only healthy. It is imperative in a democracy. Sources and methods must be rigorously protected, but leadership and management issues should be open to public scrutiny. During my career, the chronic lack of transparency into the IC blurred both bad and best management practices, complicated Congressional oversight, hid dysfunctional interagency relationships, frustrated serious reform efforts, and wasted resources. If we are serious about reform this time, public engagement can only help us.

I will touch on four general themes here this morning to help stimulate what I hope will be a lively discussion on our panel and with the audience. My comments flow from my professional experience of twenty-four years in the Intelligence Community (IC), mostly in senior analytic positions; from a five month stint in the Transition Planning Office for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2002-2003; and from a subsequent two-year tour as Staff Director of the House Select Committee on Homeland Security.

First, let's acknowledge real progress, a few missteps, and some persistent problems. We have made numerous constructive changes to enhance national security since 9/11 by improving information sharing between intelligence and law enforcement, by upgrading our intelligence relationships and capabilities, and by taking important steps to protect our critical infrastructure--which arguably is why, in addition to the President's counterterrorist offensive abroad, we have not had another such attack on US soil. This is a major achievement during a particularly challenging four-year period in our nation's history.

There is no doubt that the Intelligence Community (IC) is working hard to address key 9/11 Commission recommendations: to rebuild analytic and human intelligence capabilities, to enhance language proficiency, to recruit a culturally diverse workforce for overseas operations, and to develop collection strategies that integrate human and

technical collection. These are tough, long-term issues on which the IC has been working for years. The IC is doing good things today. But is it enough and will it last?

. We need to make today's event-driven commitment to reform endure against the shifting demands and changing priorities of the intelligence business? How do we sustain this new investment against the often overwhelming demands of current intelligence operations? In short, can we implement the 9/11 Commission and WMD Commission recommendations--most of which have a familiar ring to me--in a manner that will stick this time?

In an unprecedented period of government restructuring, we have not—nor could we have-- hit the intended target every time. We should admit this and learn from it. Since 9/11, we have created a hefty Department of Homeland Security; a Terrorist Threat Integration Center, later transformed into a more muscular National Counterterrorism Center; a FBI-led Terrorist Screening Center to integrate terrorist watch lists; and a powerful Director of National Intelligence to restructure the IC—an impressive array of new organizations. But we have consistently favored creating new “boxes” rather than fixing or eliminating the old ones—without seriously assessing the cost to existing critical programs. In the effort to stand up these new structures, we have stretched scarce analytic resources literally to the breaking point and we have dispersed valuable expertise. In my observation, we also have increased production while reducing authoritative analysis—or quality control—across these units. And we have divided—not concentrated--accountability for threat assessments across a larger number of analytic units at CIA, FBI, DHS, and NCTC.

And, most worrisome, we have yet to develop an effective domestic intelligence collection and analysis capability. This is—and should remain—FBI's responsibility, but the Bureau, in my view, has not adequately structured or resourced its new Directorate of Intelligence to do the job. In the wake of 9/11, this is high on my list of urgent, unfinished business. DHS, under the provisions of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, was widely expected to pick up some of the slack for the analysis of the terrorist threat to the homeland. But the Department has not been given adequate facilities, resources, or authorities to fulfill this mission.

Our record since 9/11, then, is a mixture of impressive successes, commendable but stalled efforts, and some failures. Much of what we have done has been understandably reactive and uncoordinated--often resulting from the conflicting priorities and unfocused interplay of the Executive and Legislative branches in an atmosphere of crisis. Current approaches, as a whole, are not cost effective as a blueprint for the future.

Crisis-driven policies of the recent past will not be adequate to protect us against the constantly regenerating threats of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. We need long-term strategies for both intelligence and homeland security that focus on our greatest threats, that allocate resources accordingly, that allow effective measurement of success, and that discipline spending.

Second, the appointment of the DNI is a big step in the right direction. The creation of the DNI position has restored to the Executive Branch—where it should be—the authority to lead IC reform. The DNI is in charge! He will be best positioned, if we give him the room to maneuver, to know the vast and complex IC, inside and out, and to manage in a sensible and measured way the implementation of reforms. But this is only about opportunity. The multiple recommendations of the various Congressional and Presidential panels, along with the constructive but imperfect intelligence reform legislation, do not give the DNI consistent or coherent guidance on priorities. We should encourage him to exercise bold leadership to help the rest of us make sense of where we are and where we need to go. In fact, we have no other responsible choice!

The appointments of John Negroponte as DNI and General Mike Hayden as his principal deputy are encouraging. We need to give them the time and support to establish priorities for reform in close consultation with the White House and the Congress. To manage the Community, the DNI should establish an IC corporate board—leadership face to face—to make the long-term implementation of reform a collaborative effort. He also must forge productive relationships with key players in intel reform: SECDEF Rumsfeld, Homeland Security Secretary Chertoff, CIA Director Goss, Attorney General Gonzalez, and FBI Director Mueller. All of these leaders need to work with the DNI to clarify their roles and responsibilities in a reformed IC—roles that have become confused in recent years.

The DNI, in my opinion, should aggressively test what jurisdiction he believes he has and unapologetically assume what else he needs to get a tough job done. Both the Executive and Legislative branches want—need, really---the DNI to seize the initiative and succeed. If he does not, valuable momentum will be lost, bureaucratic resistance will grow, and, as I see it, only DoD will come out a winner!

Third, Director Negroponte needs to develop an “agenda for success,” which will cut through today’s blizzard of negative criticisms of the IC and lay out key achievable goals for the coming three-to-five years. Needless to say, the DNI’s “agenda for success” should be the same one that the White House and the Congress are prepared—through close consultation—to follow. Against such a negotiated agenda, we should be able to measure progress effectively.

The DNI has the statutory, executive, political, and moral authority to cut through today’s endless distractions and focus on the basics of good intelligence. His strategic agenda, consistent with several (but not all) recommendations of the 9/11 and WMD commissions, should include:

- **Restoring accountability:** This sounds trite, but the DNI has a fresh opportunity to address a problem that all the post-9/11 investigators have stressed—lack of accountability in the IC. The DNI should set reform goals and standards and hold his people accountable for meeting them. He should not let investigative committees or Inspector Generals become a substitute for responsible management.

- **Developing a community-based President’s Daily Brief (PDB):** This is not about agencies taking turns. It is about producing the most authoritative, real-time analysis for the President based on the best information from all sources and the foremost expertise from wherever it resides. The PDB should be a model for the seamless integration of the highest quality classified and open-source information.
- **Rebuilding human intelligence and analysis:** This should involve carefully developed strategies, not just numbers. And the pursuit for innovation should include a rigorous review of current counterintelligence policies, as well as of security guidelines for hiring people with family links to other cultures. We are dealing with a different world out there. The DNI should aggressively pull any discussion of clandestine collection and covert action out of the public domain, while enthusiastically pushing into it a vigorous debate about the quality of IC analysis.
- **Integrating the collection disciplines:** Success against current and future threats will depend on seamlessly integrating technical and human-intelligence collection strategies. Over time, the DNI should seek opportunities to consolidate technical collection structures.
- **Creating IC-wide training:** The IC analytic community four years ago recommended the establishment of a National Intelligence University to build a common IC training curriculum in areas such as community orientation, collection management, foreign languages, and open-source exploitation. Common training would also foster career-long, inter-agency professional relationships. Implementation of this good idea is long overdue.
- **Developing an effective collection management system:** It is still too difficult for intelligence consumers to figure out how to levy requirements on our collection systems. We have made some progress on this issue, but not enough. The DNI is positioned to take some giant steps.
- **Evaluation:** The DNI has an unprecedented opportunity, in a period of tight budgetary tradeoffs, to develop the technical capability to evaluate intelligence collection and analytic programs across agencies. DCIs could not—or did not—do this effectively, to the frustration of Congress.
- **S&T:** The DNI should lead the IC to forge a revolutionary new relationship with the scientific community to be able to grasp today’s fast-developing technologies, and to come to grips with emerging technologies that will both enhance and threaten human life in the years ahead. The IC today, despite countless initiatives to address the problem, remains behind the technology curve.

Fourth, Congressional and Executive Branch priorities for reform must be aligned.

The 9/11 Commission did the most serious and damning critique of Congressional oversight that I have seen. Both the House and Senate have commendably created committees to consolidate some of the far-flung jurisdiction on homeland security. But

none of this has changed intelligence oversight or otherwise gone far enough to align, in any lasting way, Executive and Legislative branch priorities for IC reform. The 9/11 Public Discourse Project should stick with this important issue.

The 9/11 Commission—rightly in my view—asserted that reform is not possible unless the Executive and Legislative branches aligned their priorities. I believe that the absence of this alignment was a major factor impeding IC transformation prior to 9/11 and that it will continue to hinder reform if not addressed. Congress's substantive intelligence priorities in the year prior to 9/11, as I recall them, related mostly to China's military modernization and national missile defense—and less to international terrorism. This affected our priorities in the IC. So did the fact that the White House had markedly different views on these issues, as well as different priorities overall. IC reform inevitably will generate sometimes heated debate, but it will be manageable if the DNI can broker between Congress and the White House an early agreement on fundamentals.

Congressional oversight matters. The WMD Commission highlights multiple problems that have persisted since the 9/11 Commission issued its report. The President and the Congress have accepted most of the WMD Commission's findings and recommendations. The legitimate question arises, then, of why the Executive branch and the Congress, in the politically charged environment since 9/11, were not able to identify and address these problems on their own. No one believes that such commissions, however distinguished, can be a substitute for sound executive management and responsible Congressional oversight.

History will be kind to the DNI if he can get us all on the same agenda—his agenda. And it is in all our interests to help him get there.